

PIMA COUNTY/TUCSON, AZ

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANT

2001-2002 Grant Amount **\$7 Million**

Pima County Youth Opportunity

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Mission and Vision

We will help all youth in the target area, particularly out-of-school youth acquire the necessary academic, technical, workplace, and leadership skills to transition into adulthood, careers, and further education and training.

Program Overview

Pima County operates a comprehensive network of opportunities for youth ages 14-21 in the areas of employment, education, and youth development. Pima County Youth Opportunity integrates services with 37 partner agencies. This infrastructure of support engages youth from initial assessment and guides them through employment and post secondary education.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- Educational and work opportunities for out-of-school youth are up and running, including the Las Artes Tile Project, the New Media Project, GED and Basic Skills preparation, short term occupational skills training, and post secondary educational opportunities. The Pima Vocational Charter School combines academic and work experience skills. A HUD Youthbuild grant was secured and is being implemented in the YO area.
- The Kino Teen Center is fully operational, including a teen health facility and co-location with the Pledge-a-Job component that brokers private sector jobs for youth. An innovative vocational charter school and a beautiful recreation facility are also nearby.
- Contracted partner agencies provide a menu with multiple service options for both in-school and out-of-school youth.
- The Youth Council is in place and functioning well. Pima County is one of two youth councils selected nationally to create a best practices model for other Workforce Investment Boards.
- Youth Development Activities in arts, recreation, and service learning are in place throughout the YO Area.
- Rewarding Youth Achievement has successfully implemented academic and career enrichment activities for over 300 in school youth, highlighting careers in engineering, emergency services, optics and other growing fields
- Staff diversity, experience, commitment, and stability are real strengths.

KEY PARTNERS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Tucson Unified School District, Pima Community College, Juvenile Court and the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind** provide key partnerships for drop out retrieval, school retention, and post secondary options.
- **Pledge a Job** Board of Directors provides employer driven local labor market demand analysis, employment leads, and employability skills curriculum review.
- **City of Tucson Housing Department and Parks and Recreation Department** offers links to public housing, and recreational activities at four locations.
- The following Community Based Organizations represent a functionally strong and geographically diverse approach in collaboration with Pima County Youth Opportunity: **SER Jobs for Progress, the Tucson Urban League, Chicanos por la Causa, Tucson Youth Development, Tucson Indian Center, and Our Town Family Center.**
- **Pima County Youth Council** – a 30 member organization that provides community oversight of Youth Opportunity service delivery.
- **Youth In Action Council** – 30 youth organizing a county-wide Youth Success Survey and Action Plan.
- **Work Place Business Partners** – Pima County has an active 50 member Workforce Investment Board.